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Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 13, line 3, with the following amended paragraph:

FIGURE 3 is an external, side view of a portion of a human spine; ~~human pine~~;

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 32, line 7, with the following amended paragraph:

As illustrated in FIGURE 18, a yet further spinal stabilization device embodiment 180 consists of a solid generally cylindrical ~~cylindrical~~ elongate body 181, with a rounded or bullet-shaped distal end face or nose 182 to distract (spread-apart) the vertebra and a flat proximal face radial end 183 with rounded peripheral edges 184. The stabilization device 180 can be made of a metal such as titanium, or a material such as high density polyethylene, or polyethyl ether ketone (PEEK), or a carbon fiber composite. Carbon fiber composites can be made with a modulus of elasticity similar to that of the vertebral bone, whereas titanium has a modulus of elasticity one third of that of the bone (three times the stiffness of bone).

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 35, line 22, with the following amended paragraph:

To prevent excessive angular movement of the vertebra above and below the disc into which the spinal stabilization device has been inserted, it is desirable to limit the angular movement of the vertebra to less than about 40°, preferably to less than about 30°, to prevent either of the vertebra pressing upon or pinching the nerves that lie ~~that lie~~ along the outside perimeter of the disc.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 35, line 27, with the following amended paragraph:

As shown in FIGURE 25, cylindrical spinal stabilization device 250 has horizontal slats 254 extending through both sides of a partially hollow body 251 which

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includes a bullet-shaped distal end 252 and a flat radial proximal end face 253. Slots 254 ~~Slots 254~~ can likewise extend through both sides of the bodies of the respective spinal stabilization device embodiments described above. The other features and elements of the device embodiment 250 are otherwise similar to the features and elements of the device embodiment 180 shown in FIGURE 18.